

II. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of automatic payment of a software license fee to a licensor for a service program which is run and licensed to a service arrangement, comprising:

receiving input information, including a dictation by a user, from a user device of a the user of a service offered by the service arrangement;

processing the received input information with the service program and rendering output information available, wherein the processing comprises determining one of a number of words in the dictation and a number of edition operations during a transcription of the dictation;

sending the available output information to the user device;

determining software license settlement information from the output information; and

sending the determined software license payment information to a pay system for automatic payment of the software license fee for the service program to the licensor, which pay system provides a bill for the software license fee for the use of the service program by an operator of the service arrangement based on the sent software license payment information.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the service arrangement runs a speech recognition program including:

receiving speech information of a dictation of the user as the input information,

processing the speech information,

recognizing text information of the dictation from the received speech information, and

sending the recognized text information as the output information to the user device of the user of the service arrangement.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein an identification number of the service program is entered in the software license payment information during an installation of the software of the service program and is stored by the service arrangement.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the software license payment information is stored in encoded form by the service arrangement.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the service arrangement executes at least two service programs in parallel and in which the service arrangement takes these at least two service programs into account when the software license payment information is determined.

6. (Currently Amended) A transcription service arrangement for offering a transcription service and for determining software license payment information, to enable an automatic payment of a software license fee for a speech recognition program run by the transcription service arrangement to a licensor, comprising:

receiving means for receiving speech information of a dictation from a user device of a user of the transcription service,

speech recognition means which, when the speech recognition program is run, are arranged for processing the received speech information and for providing text information which is recognized from the received speech information,

service payment means for determining service payment information for the transcription of the user's speech information, wherein the determining further comprises determining one of a number of words in the dictation and a number of edition operations during the transcription of the dictation,

service send means for sending the recognized text information,

software license payment means for determining the software license payment information from the determined service payment information based on the recognized text information, and

software license send means for sending the determined software license payment information to a pay system which is provided for preparing a bill for the software license fee on the basis of the received software license payment information for the use of the speech recognition program by the operator of the transcription service arrangement.

7. (Previously Presented) The transcription service arrangement of claim 6, wherein the software license payment means are arranged for detecting a manipulation of the determined service payment information and for detecting a manipulation of the determined software license payment information.

8. (Previously Presented) The transcription service arrangement of claim 6, wherein the software license payment means are arranged for requesting a new prepaid balance from the pay system when the prepaid balance stored in the pay system has reached a predetermined value.

9. (Previously Presented) The transcription service arrangement of claim 6, wherein the

software license send means are provided for periodically sending the determined software license payment information to the pay system even when the speech recognition program was not run in the payment interval by the transcription service arrangement.

10. (Currently Amended) A pay system for automatic payment of a software license fee for a service program run by a service arrangement, comprising receiving means for receiving software license payment information from the service arrangement, which runs the service program so that input information is processed by a user device, wherein the processing includes determining one of a number of words in a dictation and a number of edition operations during a transcription of the dictation, and output information is delivered to the user device, and comprising software license billing means for processing the received software license payment information and for preparing a bill for the software license fee for the use of the service program by the operator of the service arrangement based on the output information.

11. (Previously Presented) The pay system for automatic payment of claim 10, wherein the software license billing means are provided for deducting the amount of the available bill from a prepaid balance of the operator of the service arrangement.

12. (Previously Presented) A computer program product which can be directly loaded into the internal memory of a digital computer and comprises software code sections, in which the computer executes the steps of the method as claimed in claim 1.

13. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 12, wherein it is stored on a medium that can be read by the digital computer.

14. (Cancelled).

15. (Cancelled).